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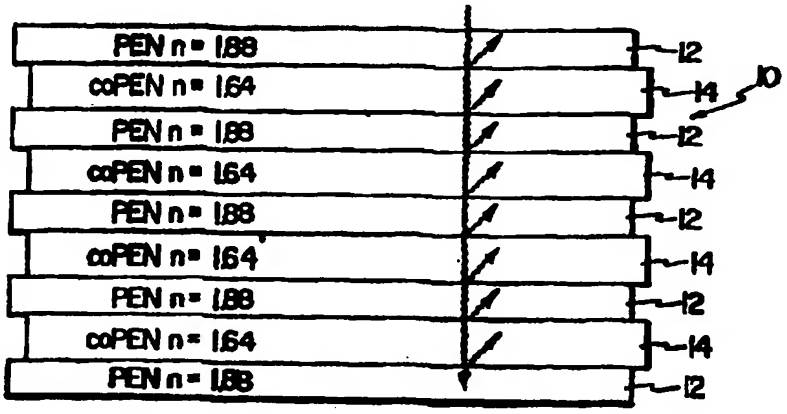

(57) Abstract

Birefringent optical films (10, 12, 14) have a Brewster angle (the angle at which reflectance of p-polarized light goes to zero) which is very large or is nonexistant. This allows for the construction of multilayer mirrors and polarizers whose reflectivity for p-polarized light decreases slowly with angle of incidence, are independent of angle of incidence, or increase with angle of incidence away from the normal. As a result, multilayer films (10) having high reflectivity (for both planes of polarization for any incident direction in the case of mirrors, and for the selected direction in the case of polarizers) over a wide bandwidth, can be achieved.